



Connecticut Department of

**ENERGY &
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION**

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Public Hearing – March 2, 2012

Environment Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Daniel Esty
Presented by Deputy Commissioner Susan Frechette

**Raise House Bill No. 5259 - AN ACT REQUIRING THE INSPECTION OF VESSELS AND VESSEL TRAILERS
FOR AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES**

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding Raised House Bill No. 5259 – An Act Requiring the Inspection of Vessels and Vessel Trailers for Aquatic Invasive Species. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) welcomes the opportunity to offer the following testimony.

Currently, any person who transports a vessel or a vessel trailer over the road is required to inspect those items and remove any vegetation before beginning transport. This inspection helps to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species, or “AIS”. This bill seeks to expand this requirement to include invasive animal species in addition to vegetation. Given all that we have learned about the spread of zebra mussels, DEEP believes this change is timely and prudent and we support it.

Implementing the proposed bill as written would allow Connecticut to follow other states that are leading the AIS fight. But, with changes we propose below, DEEP could lead rather than follow. The attached proposed language, if implemented, would allow us a more robust response to AIS by: including all AIS of concern in the inspection and removal requirement; requiring the commissioner to list those AIS of concern while providing a means to convey that list to the public via the Boater’s Guide, an annual digest of rules, ordinances, regulations and laws the publication of which is required by law and which is widely anticipated and distributed annually throughout the state; including a requirement to drain all pooled water from vessels and trailers to the extent practicable prior to transport, to reduce the possibility of transporting invisible water-borne AIS; and, providing the commissioner the authority to develop by regulation and implement an AIS inspection self-certification requirement for vessels arriving at or leaving at-risk water bodies.

Our proposed substitute language is provided below.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this proposal. If you should require any additional information, please contact DEEP’s legislative liaison, Robert LaFrance at 424-3401 or Robert.LaFrance@ct.gov

Sec. 15-180. Transporting vessel or trailer without inspecting for and properly removing and disposing of vegetation. Penalty. (a) No person shall transport a vessel, as defined in section 15-127, or any trailer used to transport such vessel, in the state without first inspecting such vessel for the presence of vegetation and properly removing and disposing of any such vegetation from such vessel or trailer.

(b) No person shall transport a vessel, as defined in section 15-127, or any trailer used to transport such vessel, in the state without first inspecting such vessel for the presence of aquatic invasive species, as identified by the commissioner in the annual publication of laws, regulations and ordinances specified in section 15-138, that are visible and identifiable without optical magnification, and properly removing and disposing of any such aquatic invasive species from such vessel or trailer.

(c) No person shall transport a vessel, as defined in section 15-127, or any trailer used to transport such vessel, in the state without first draining water to the extent practicable from the hull or hulls, motor or motors, bilge or bilges, live well or wells, interior cavity or cavities, bait containers, and other boating or trailering equipment before leaving the boat launch or water access area.

(d) No person shall transport a vessel, as defined in section 15-127, or any trailer used to transport such vessel, from any boat launch or water access area on any waterbody identified by the commissioner in the annual publication of laws, regulations and ordinances specified in section 15-138 without first certifying in a manner specified by the commissioner that such vessel or trailer has been inspected, cleaned and drained as identified in this section or as otherwise directed by the commissioner in said annual boating law publication. The commissioner shall by regulation determine the manner and form of certification that shall be required.

[(b)] (e) Any person who violates the provisions of this section shall be fined not more than one hundred dollars for each such violation.